

FCC

To Whom It May Concern:

It is absolutely imperative that telephone companies pay franchise fees for use of public right of ways and airwaves. These essential services cost, there is no good reason taxpayers should be forced to shoulder excess burden by getting nothing in return.

Already the broadcast and cable cast media is dominated by money making conglomerates that sensationalize rather than inform. They are dominated by national companies that do little local coverage. What little local news they do present is focused on crime rather than public affairs. We need public access stations to do coverage of local events that the commercial media would never touch. I produced a series for 9 months covering issues of governance for a large community radio station with 20,000 members. I was able to communicate issues that never could be communicated as clearly without access to the local public access channels. Additionally my show covered local groups that were working on issues of unjust criminal convictions, as well as HIV/AIDS issues.

If telephone companies want to provide broadband services and cable TV services they need to give something back to the community. If they are greedy and refuse, they should not be given access to people's homes. The phone companies have a long history of greedy behavior, for them to try to dictate conditions to local government is to confirm our worst fears about how they will behave in the future. As it is, there aren't enough public access stations. There should also be audio streams available to community and public radio stations so the signals can get in every home. There should also be public access radio stations added to the requirements for phone and cable companies.

Sincerely,

John Riley